

The Croydon Chronicle

NEWSLETTER

SPRING / SUMMER 2012

In This Issue:

- Recycled Paper Beads
- Box Turtles
- Summer Constellation
- Spring Festival,
Native Plant Sale,
10th Anniversary
Celebration
April 28, 1-4 p.m.

Croydon Creek Nature Center

852 Avery Road
(off Baltimore Road)
Rockville, MD 20851
240-314-8770
[www.rockvillemd.gov/
croydoncreek](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/croydoncreek)



Letter from the Supervisor

Spring is, by far, my favorite time of year. My favorite spring flower, bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), quickly blooms and the trees begin to leaf out. Birds are returning from their winter homes to nest and the foxes are expanding their families. Even after the mild winter, nature seems more alive and somehow more exciting. Or maybe it's because there are so many fantastic things happening at CCNC?

This Spring marks a special milestone for Croydon Creek Nature Center; it is our 10th anniversary! Dedicated in April 2002, the Nature Center has provided area residents with a variety of educational and entertaining programs, exhibits, and special events over the course of the last decade. We owe our success to you, our visitors. You have helped to shape the Nature Center into what it is today and we thank you. If you have a special memory of Croydon Creek Nature Center and you want to share it, please email it to us at ccnc@rockvillemd.gov. We are assembling a scrapbook of the last 10 years and would appreciate visitor input. If you have little ones, they could send us a drawing of their favorite CCNC critter! We are excited to see what the next 10 years will bring. To celebrate this milestone we will host a 10th Anniversary Spring Festival and Native Plant Sale on April 28, 2012, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. We hope to see you there.

Staff is constantly striving to provide high quality environmental educational programs and new offerings. The Nature Center is promoting several new initiatives including citizen science

opportunities. Citizen Science refers to scientific research that is conducted, in part or entirely, by everyday people. There are many projects available to folks who want to get involved. We launched a new Citizen Science series that introduces participants to a different citizen science project in each course. In May we have our Citizen Science: Stream Monitoring and in July, we have our Citizen Science: The Lost Ladybug Project. Both are great ways to participate in worthwhile scientific research.

We also have some new summer camps this year. Our week-long camps provide a wonderful chance to experience nature with a trained naturalist. We have several different camp options for children ages 5-14. Junior Naturalists is a new camp geared towards 9-12 year-olds that will give children the basic skills they need to become naturalists. Our Nature Service Learning Camp for 10-14 year-olds will provide guided instruction on local environmental issues and give students opportunities to earn SSL hours. Finally, Guppy camps are back with two full day options to give beginner nature-lovers more opportunities for outdoor fun.

Your continued support is so important to Croydon Creek Nature Center and we value your feedback. Send us an email and tell us about your experiences here, or better yet, stop by and visit us when you have a chance. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Best regards,

Elissa Totin
Nature Center Supervisor



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Get Into It

Kids Craft: Recycled Paper Beads

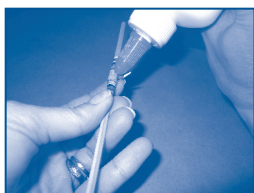
Supplies:



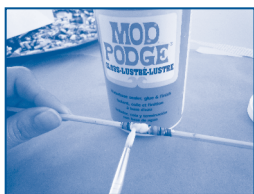
- Glossy, colorful magazine paper cut into elongated triangles
- Something to wrap the bead around. We used skewers with the sharp end cut off. You may also use straws, small dowels, paint brush handles, pencils, etc.
- White Glue
- Scissors
- Decoupage or spray varnish

Directions:

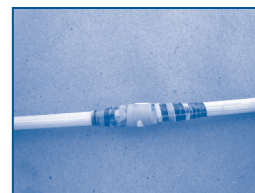
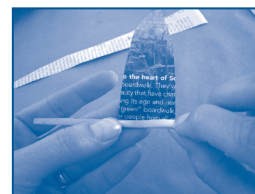
1. Cut an elongated triangle out of the magazine paper. The base of the triangle will determine the width of the bead and the longer the triangle is the chubbier the bead will be.
2. Starting with the wide end, begin wrapping the triangle of paper around your stick of choice.



3. As you get closer to the end, apply a small amount of white glue to the inside of the paper. Be careful not to use too much glue as to not accidentally glue the bead to the stick.
4. For best results try to get the pointy end of the triangle as close to the center of the bead as possible.



5. You may roll several beads on one stick. After you have finished with each stick apply a thin layer of decoupage or spray varnish being careful not to adhere the bead to the stick.
6. After the bead has dried, slide it off of the stick and string it in to a necklace or bracelet!



Summer Constellation: The Summer Triangle

The summer triangle is an astronomical asterism or pattern of stars in the summer sky. Asterisms can form an official constellation or be composed of stars from more than one constellation. In each corner of the summer triangle asterism lies the brightest star in each of three constellations. In one corner, Altair of the constellation Aquila which is the Latin name for eagle. In mythology, the Roman god Jupiter owned Aquila. In another corner is Deneb, the brightest star in the constellation Cygnus the Swan, also known as the Northern Cross. In the third corner is Vega, the brightest in the constellation Lyra the Harp. Vega is the fifth brightest star in the sky and only 25 light years away from Earth. Because of Vega's close proximity to Earth it has been studied extensively. On a clear night this summer go outside and see if you can catch a glimpse of the summer triangle. Also, register for our Summer Star Party on June 9 (Course #39009) to visit

with an astronomer and learn more about the stars of the summer sky. Space is limited in this class so be sure to register early!

2012 marks CCNC's 10th Anniversary
Please send us your favorite memory, picture or drawing of Croydon Creek and we'll post it on our special 10th Anniversary Celebration board!
ccnc@rockvillemd.gov

Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*)

By Melinda Norton, Assistant Supervisor

The Eastern Box Turtle is a common terrestrial or land turtle found in Maryland. They can be found in forests, meadows, near swamps and even in your backyard! These turtles are well suited for their environment with excellent camouflage, helping them to hide from their predators. Box turtle shells are usually brown with yellow markings, making them almost impossible to see on the forest floor. Their high, dome-shaped shell also offers excellent protection. Just like most turtles, box turtles can pull their head and legs into their shell; however, box turtles have an extra line of protection. Their bottom shell or plastron is hinged which means that once their legs and head are safely tucked inside their shell can shut tightly, like a box. This keeps them safe from the noses of foxes and raccoons that may be looking for their next meal.



Box turtles are very long lived. In the wild they have been known to live over a hundred years. Despite their longevity, box turtles remain relatively small in size. Most only grow about six to seven inches in diameter. Their skin is brown with yellow or sometimes orange markings. Their eye color can predict the sex of the animal. If the turtle has yellow or brown eyes then most likely it is a female, if it has red or orange eyes then most likely it is a male.

Box turtles are omnivores and make their meals on things like worms, slugs and insects as well as fruits, berries, mushrooms and flowers. This makes many urban backyards a great habitat for box turtles to live. If you find one in your yard you're in luck because you are sharing your home with a box turtle! Make sure to leave it where it is and watch to see if you see it again. Box turtles have very small home ranges (about 5 acres or less) and are territorial, so you shouldn't attempt to move the box turtle. It is thought that if a box turtle is moved from its home range it may spend its life trying to get back.

Mating occurs in spring and nesting usually occurs May through July. Females lay four to six eggs per clutch in a nest dug in soft soil. After the eggs have been laid she covers them up and leaves the nest. She may lay several clutches during a nesting season. She may also lay fertile eggs for up to four years after a successful mating. The eggs are small and elliptical with a thin, white, flexible shell. During incubation the eggs are vulnerable to predators such as foxes, raccoons and skunks. If you see a box turtle laying eggs in your yard do not disturb her or attempt to move the eggs once they are in the nest. To protect the eggs from predators you may construct a small cage around the nesting area to keep out hungry visitors. Eggs incubate for at least three months and will sometimes overwinter in the nest and hatch in the spring. When the babies hatch they are about the size of a quarter.

During the summer it is common to see box turtles crossing busy roads. If you see a box turtle attempting to cross the road and if it is safe for you to do so, you may pick them up and move them across the road. Make sure to place them on the side of the road in the direction in which they were traveling, this way the turtle can safely continue its journey in the direction it was intending on going. As box turtles are territorial, it is not a good idea to take them from the side of the road and move them to a park or forest. This may do more harm than good. Placing them as close to where you found them as possible is the best choice for the turtle.

If you are lucky enough to find a box turtle outside this summer take a close look and see if you can see the color of its eyes and make a prediction about its sex. Check out how it reacts to you. Does it close its shell up tightly like a box? You may even carefully pick it up and see its colors more closely. Once you are done examining it, gently place it back where you found it and walk away. Remember when you are outside, you are in the animal's home so make sure to be respectful. Due to federal and state regulations, Croydon Creek is not allowed to accept injured animals, so if you happen to find a box turtle or any other animal that is injured, call Second Chance Wildlife, a wildlife rehabilitation center in Gaithersburg, at (301)926-9453, for advice.



Spend your summer at Croydon Creek Nature Center

Experience the outdoors with naturalist led camps
for children ages 5 to 14.

Ages 5-7	Guppy Nature Camps
Ages 7-10	Nature Explorations • Nature Art
Ages 9-12	Junior Naturalists • Wilderness Skills
Ages 10-14	Nature Service Learning Camp Native Naturalists • Nature Adventures

Spaces are limited so register today!



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Programs

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All programs take place at Croydon Creek Nature Center

Citizen Science Series

This ongoing series will introduce participants to different citizen science opportunities in our area. Find out how you can contribute to valuable scientific studies and spend time outdoors.

Stream Monitoring

Stream monitors provide valuable information on the health of our local watersheds. Participants will evaluate our stream for aquatic insects, chemical contaminants and physical appearance and learn how they can get involved in the City's "Save Our Streams" program by becoming a regular volunteer.

All Ages
39010 Su 5/6 1:30-3 PM \$6/\$8

Croydon Creek Campfire

Gather around the campfire at Croydon Creek Nature Center with your friends for stories, snacks and more. An adult must accompany children and all participants must register. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs for seating.

Oh Deer!

Did you know that deer can jump as far as 30 feet in a single bound? Come find out many more amazing facts about our largest urban mammal, the white-tailed deer.

All Ages
38993 Sa 5/12 8-9 PM \$4/\$5

Age: 8+

Camping Basics

Learn some basic skills needed for camping with your family. From fire building to putting up a tent, this program can help you on your way to outdoor family fun this summer!

39330 Sa 6/30 7:30-9 PM \$4/\$5

Eco-Explorers

Come to the Nature Center after school ends for hands-on activities, hikes and trips. A letter will be mailed detailing the day's activities and what to wear and bring. Register by: 6/10

Maryland Science Center

Participants will spend the day exploring the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore.

Age: 8-12
38990 Th 6/14 9 AM-3 PM \$40/\$47

Go Green Lecture Series

Co-sponsored by the Nature Center and the City's Environmental Management Division, this lecture series offers easy ways you can make a positive impact on your environment. Advance registration required.

Landscape Audits

Evaluate the sustainability of your landscape. Learn the basics of landscape audits and find out how to analyze your landscape to increase biodiversity, improve drainage issues and beautify your garden.

Age: 16+
38989 W 5/23 7-8 PM Free

Hooray for Homeschoolers!

Croydon Creek Nature Center presents a series of programs offered specifically for our homeschooling friends. Each program consists of hands-on and minds-on activities that include both time in our classroom laboratory along with activities and hikes outdoors.

Age: 6-15

Plants Matter

Plants play a critical role in our everyday life. Participants will understand the agricultural, medicinal and economic importance of plants while learning the basics of plant anatomy and identification.

39006 F 5/18 1-3 PM \$6/\$8

Stream Study

Explore our stream and learn about the animals that inhabit it. From macroinvertebrates to amphibians, participants will get a hands-on lesson in stream ecology. Participants must wear closed-toe shoes in order to participate.

39007 F 6/8 1-3 PM \$6/\$8

Saturday Story and Hike

Stop by the Nature Center for storytime and a hike. Our Naturalist will read a story and lead a hike based on the story. Dress for the weather. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Age: 2-5
38987 Sa 5/19 10-11 AM \$3/\$5



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Junior Naturalists

Interested in insects? Wild about wildflowers? Explore forest, field and creek through hands-on activities while learning more about the world that surrounds us. Hone your naturalist skills through field studies, journaling, art projects and science investigations. Camp may include an off-site field trip.

Age: 9-12
9 AM-3 PM
38231 6/18-6/22 \$225/\$250

Nature Explorations

Whether on land or in water, enjoy discovering nature. Topics may include geology, stream ecology, zoology and botany. Explore a variety of habitats through hands-on and mind-on activities, field studies and other experiments. Camp may include an off-site field trip.

Age: 7-10
9 AM-3 PM
38225 6/25-6/29 \$215/\$245
38226 7/23-7/27 \$215/\$245

Native Naturalists

Did you know that birch bark canoes were invented by the Eastern First Peoples? Discover how to preserve and conserve our natural resources through projects, field trips, crafts and activities inspired by American Indians. Camp includes an off-site field trip. Age: 10-14

9 AM-3 PM
38229 7/9-7/13 \$225/\$250

Summer Programs

Star Party

Join us to learn about the stars in the late spring sky. Discover objects easily visible in the night sky, look through telescopes with an astronomer and enjoy a campfire treat. All participants must register.

Age: 5+
39009 Sa 6/9 8:30-9:30 PM \$5/\$6

Saturday Story and Hike

Stop by the Nature Center for story time and a hike. Our Naturalist will read a story and lead a hike based on the story. Dress for the weather. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Age: 2-5
39332 Sa 7/28 10-11 AM \$3/\$5
39333 Sa 8/25 10-11 AM \$3/\$5

Guppy Nature Camp

What's creeping, crawling and flapping your way? Guppy Nature Camp! Meet the critters that call Croydon Creek home and explore exciting natural history topics. Hands-on activities, experiments, hikes and crafts are all in a day's fun.

Age: 5-7
9:30 AM-12 PM
38222 7/16-7/20 \$95/\$115
38224 8/13-8/17 \$95/\$115

9:30 AM-2:30 PM
38221 6/25-6/29 \$190/\$230
38223 7/23-7/27 \$190/\$230

Nature Service Learning Camp

Have fun at Croydon Creek while earning Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. Participants will investigate two local environmental issues each morning. In the afternoon they will complete an eco-friendly volunteer project. Each person will receive three SSL hours per day (six hours total). Age: 10-14

9 AM-3 PM
38230 8/1 & 8/2 \$80/\$100

Nature Adventures

Get active during this five day outdoor camp. Each day campers will participate in a different off-site nature excursion including canoeing, fishing, hiking and more. Join us for a unique adventure each day. Age: 10-14

9 AM-3 PM
38233 8/20-8/24 \$245/\$285

Citizen Science Series

This ongoing series will introduce participants to different citizen science opportunities in our area. Find out how you can contribute to valuable scientific studies and spend time outdoors.

All Ages
The Lost Ladybug Project

The Lost Ladybug Project studies the impact of ladybug populations and needs your help! After an introduction to ladybug identification, we'll scatter through our meadow catching and photographing ladybugs to send to the LLP.

39321 Su 7/15 2-3:30 PM \$6/\$8

Wilderness Skills

Are you a fan of Bear Grylls or Survivorman? Are you amazed by their abilities to survive in the wilderness with just the bare necessities? Participants won't be eating any grubs or road kill but they will learn basic outdoor skills, from campfire cooking to primitive shelter construction, as well as plant and wildlife identification. Camp may include an off-site field trip. Age: 9-12

9 AM-3 PM
38232 8/6-8/10 \$225/\$250

Nature Art

Explore your creativity and hone your artistic skills during this week-long camp that combines your love of nature with your enthusiasm for art. Campers will get their creative juices flowing with outdoor games and hikes and use a variety of media to create works inspired by the natural world. Camp may include an off-site field trip. Age: 8-10

9 AM-3 PM
38227 8/13-8/17 \$215/\$245

Polliwog Adventures

Each week explore a new topic in natural history. Through stories, short hikes, games and activities, little ones will learn about nature in a hands-on environment. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited.

Age: 2-5
Raptors
39322 Th 7/12 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Life Under a Log
39323 Th 7/19 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Little Gardeners
39324 Th 7/26 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Worms and Bugs
39325 Th 8/2 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Reptiles
39326 Th 8/9 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Water Wonders
39327 Th 8/16 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Crazy Catterpillars
39328 Th 8/23 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

**Summer Programs - Resident Registration starts May 17.
Non Resident starts May 24.**